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SCOTT SNYDER

RAFAEL ALBUQUERQUE

AMERICAN VAMPIRE



VERTIGO



\$2.99 US

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suggested for
mature readers
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Cruces, New Mexico. 1954.

THE GRAY TRADER

SCOTT SNYDER writer RAFAEL ALBUQUERQUE artist

DAVE MCCALL covers JARED K. FLETCHER covers ALBUQUERQUE cover

GREGORY LOCKARD art MARK COYLE edit

AMERICAN VAMPIRE created by SCOTT SNYDER & RAFAEL ALBUQUERQUE

"THE STRIKE OCCURRED
IN BROAD DAYLIGHT,
AROUND TWO FORTY IN
THE AFTERNOON."









SCOUGHIE
UNK...PLEASE--
SCOUGHIE

SHHH, THAT
WAS DIMES. TRICK
MY FATHER TAUGHT ME
WHEN I WAS A LITTLE
GIRL. HURTS LIKE HELL
BUT WON'T REALLY
KILL A MAN...



...UNLESS YOU
GET HIM IN THE
TENDER FACE.



NOW I'LL
ASK YOU ONE
LAST TIME.
WHO AM I?



SCOUGH'S YOU'RE ABILENA
BOOK. FORMER SCOUGHIE
SENIOR AGENT OF THE VASSALS
OF THE MORNING STAR.
RESIGNED IN 194--



AW, YOU'RE
BEING POLITE, NOT
RESIGNED...

EXPELLED
IN 1949.

GOOD...

...NOW
OPEN THAT
BRIEFCASE
YOU WERE
CARRYING.



...
GET
INSIDE.



DON'T, DON'T
KILL ME, PLEASE, I
JUST WANTED SOME
ANSWERS. I'M
DESPERATE,
I--



YOU WANT
SOME SWEET
TOAST?



YOU'RE NOT
GOING TO--



I GET TOO FEW VISITORS
THESE DAYS TO KILL A
CHANCE AT DECENT
CONVERSATION.

WELL
THANK YOU,
I R--

AND I HAVE FAITH
IN YOUR CONVERSATIONAL
ABILITIES, AS I KNOW WHO
YOU ARE. I'M SORRY, MY
EYES AREN'T GOOD ANYMORE.
I COULDN'T SEE YOU WHEN I
SHOT YOU, BUT WHEN I GOT
UP CLOSE--I KNEW
YOUR BLOOD.

YES, YOU
KNEW MY
UNCLE.



WILL
BUNTING.
YOU LOOK
LIKE HIM.



MY NAME'S
GENE. WILL WAS MY
UNCLE. I ONLY KNEW HIM
THESE LAST FEW YEARS.
HE WAS SICK WHEN HE
BROUGHT ME INTO THE
FOLD TO BE HIS
REPLACEMENT.

TO US, TO HIS
FAMILY, HE DIED BACK
IN 1925. I ONLY LEARNED
ABOUT THE VASSALS,
ABOUT HOW THEY'D TAKEN
HIM IN TO BE BOOK-
KEEPER, ABOUT FIVE
YEARS AGO. I WAS
A JOURNALIST.

A WAR CORRESPONDENT,
BUT WITH NO WAR. I WAS IN
A BAD WAY, AND THEN, ONE
MORNING, I'M STANDING IN MY
KITCHEN, OPENING A BEER
FOR BREAKFAST, AND WHO'S
STANDING THERE BUT
UNCLE WILL.

SAYS HE
WAS A WAR
FOR ME TO
COVER.



ARE YOU
BOOKKEEPER
NOW?

YES,
I AM.

HOW
DID HE
GO?



PEACEFULLY. AT THE HEADQUARTERS
IN THE KEYS. THEY WANTED HIM BACK
AT THE WEST COAST BASE, BUT HE SAID
THE FISHING WAS TOO GOOD DOWN
THERE. WE ALL KNEW IT WAS THE SWEET
ISSUE THOUGH. HE NEVER GOT OVER
SKINNER SWEETS' RECRUITMENT.
OR YOUR FIRING.

CAN I
ASK YOU
IF IT'S
TRUE?

IF
WHAT'S
TRUE?

WHAT
THEY SAY
HAPPENED
TO YOU?

WHAT
DO THEY
SAY?

"WELL...IT WASN'T LONG AFTER
SWEET WAS RECRUITED. YOU PUT IN
FOR A MISSION WITH HIM. HOBBS
OBLIGED, THINKING YOU WERE OVER
YOUR HATRED OF SWEET BY THEN..."

"...THAT YOU WERE
TRYING TO PROVE
SOME POINT, GOING
BACK OUT INTO THE
FIELD AFTER SO
LONG, WITH HIM AT
YOUR SIDE."

"BUT?"



"BUT...YOU
WEREN'T
OVER IT."



"SWEET RESCUED
YOU AND TOOK YOU
BACK FOR HELP."



2012



THE GRAY
TRADER.

YES.

HOW
DID YOU
KN--

WHAT DO YOUR
SUPERIORS THINK
ABOUT YOUR
THEORY?

I HAVEN'T TOLD
THEM. IT'S MY OWN HUNCH.
BUT I HAVE EVIDENCE, FROM
SEISMIC DATA TO MORE OMINOUS
RECORDINGS LIKE COMMUNITIES
VANISHED OVERNIGHT. I CAN
TELL YOU ABOUT A SETTLEMENT
ON INDIAN LANDS NEAR
KAYENTA, ARIZ--

WHAT
DOES THIS
HAVE TO
DO WITH
ME?

THE BITE YOU
SUSTAINED IN THAT
INCIDENT WITH SWEET.
THE SPECIES YOU
ENCOUNTERED,
EVIDENCE SUGGESTS
THAT VICTIMS WHO
SURVIVE THE VENOM,
THEY SOMETIMES
HAVE VISIONS...

...VISIONS
OF THE FUTURE.
UNSETTLINGLY
ACCURATE
PREDICTIONS.

IS THAT
SO?

WELL, YOU'RE
THE ONLY PERSON
BITTEN BY ONE IN
ABOUT A THOUSAND
YEARS, SO IT'S HARD
TO KNOW. BUT THE
CASSANDRA
FOLKLORE...

YOU'RE HERE TO ASK ME
ABOUT THE FUTURE?
YOU MUST BE
DESPERATE.

I'M
SORRY. I
CAN'T HELP
YOU.

I KNOW
WHAT USING
THE ABILITY
DOES. I'VE
READ ABOUT
IT, I MEAN.
HOW IT
ALERTS
OTHERS...

BUT MRS. BOOK, IF
HE IS OUT THERE, THE GRAY
TRADER, IT MEANS THE END
OF THIS PLACE, IF WE DON'T
ACT. NOT THIS HOUSE. NOT
THIS STATE. THIS COUNTRY.
HE COULD ATTACK AT ANY
TIME. THE FORCES HE MIGHT
HAVE AMASSED ALREADY--

YOU DIDN'T
EAT YOUR
TOAST. BUT
I'M AFRAID IT'S
TIME FOR YOU
TO LEAVE.

MRS.
BOOK
I--

OF COURSE.
I'M SORRY I
BOTHERED
YOU.



I'M SORRY ABOUT YOUR UNCLE. HE WAS A DEAR FRIEND.



THANK YOU.

AND SO YOU KNOW... YOUR DAUGHTER, FELICIA, IS A DEAR FRIEND OF MINE.

AND SHE'S WELL. SHE'S ACTUALLY ABOUT TO TAKE OVER FOR AGENT HOBBS, AS DIRECTOR OF--



I DIDN'T ASK.



BUT THANK YOU.







NO!













YES,
I DID.



To Be
Continued In
2013!

SNYDER/ALBUQUERQUE/MURRAY

ON THE LEDGE



For hours now, I've been trying to come up with a good opener for this column, some expression to start off, a play on words, a pun, something clever. But the truth is, there are only two words to open this column with, and they are: "Thank you."

For three years now, you've followed us on our crazy journey, in the pages of AMERICAN VAMPIRE, for a collected total of forty-three issues, across more than eight hundred pages of comics. But more than issues or pages, we've traveled together, with these characters we've loved – Pearl and Skinner, Henry, Felicia, Gus and Cal – across time, through more than six decades of American history, across oceans and back, from the dusty plains of the Old West to the bright suburbs of the 1950s. It's been a wild ride so far, full of horrors and wonders, deaths and rebirths, Rafael and I couldn't be more grateful to you all for traveling these fictional roads with us.

I just want to make it absolutely crystal clear about the hiatus of this series (which starts with issue #34): this is not indefinite. In fact, it's a very short break Rafa and I are taking so that we can recharge and, more important, get far enough ahead on the coming stories to allow Rafa to draw more of the arcs in the second cycle of AMERICAN VAMPIRE. We've loved everyone who's joined the AMERICAN VAMPIRE family on fill-ins and on miniseries, but for the final half of the series, the half where everything we've built so far converges and comes crashing together, Rafa and I decided we wanted to do more of the stories the two of us, as a team and co-creators.

And, even though AMERICAN VAMPIRE will be on break, don't worry! There are a bunch of great new series coming your way in 2013. I'll be doing a new limited series – a science-fiction horror epic about the mysteries of the deep – with the amazing Sean Murphy (who did AMERICAN VAMPIRE: SURVIVAL OF THE FITTEST). And my pal Jeff Lemire will be launching a limited series, too – a brilliant science fiction piece called Trillium – which is literally about the last love story in the universe.

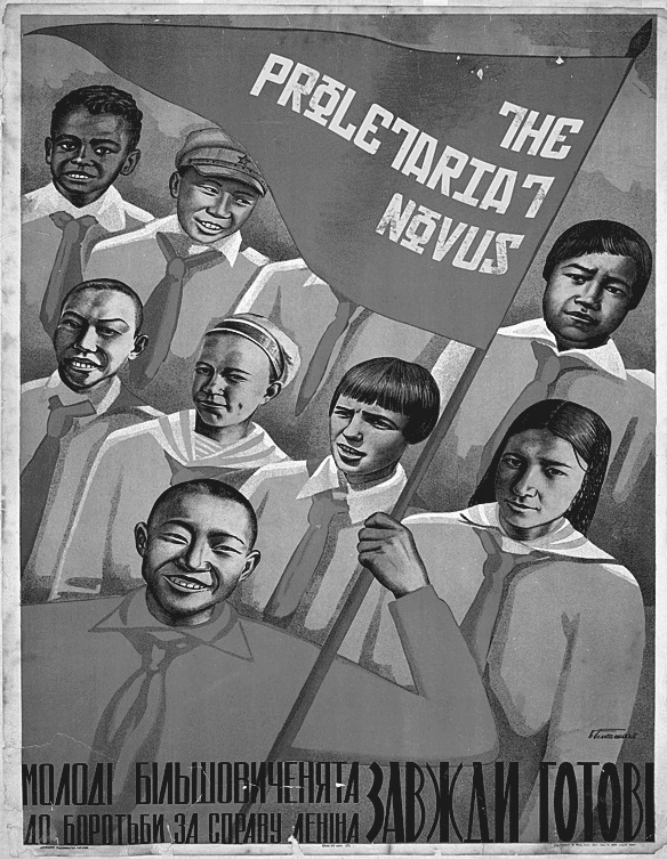
So yes, we're taking a break and then we'll be back (in fact, the story that brings us back is already written!), bigger, better, and badder than ever. And as you can tell from hints and clues in issue 34, the best is yet to come. That all of us on AMERICAN VAMPIRE can promise you. Thank you again, from the bottom of our black, twisted hearts.

– Scott Snyder

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PROLETARIAT
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ДО БОРЬБИ ЗА СПРАВУ ЛЕНИНА